

Clark Sharks Team Handbook

Table of Contents

- I. Coaches Philosophy
- II. Coaches Expectations
- III. Team Goals and requirements
- IV. Program Requirements
- V. Areas of Competition
- VI. Parent's Participation
- VII. Parent Board / Roles
- VIII. Communication
- IX. Swimming Terms

Contact Information

Head Coach Barbara Lawrence

Aquatics and Safety Director

Clark Memorial YMCA

155 Central Street

Winchendon, Ma 01475

978-297-9600

blawrence@theclark.com

Clark Memorial YMCA Clark Sharks Swim Team

Coaches Philosophy

The coaching staff believes that swimming is a lifelong sport. We encourage our swimmers to challenge themselves regularly. Swimming is both an individual and team sport. We believe that swimming should be a fun sport, but it does take a lot of hard work to achieve one's goals. As coaches we will provide guidance and teach the swimmers proper technique. However a coach cannot make a swimmer attain their goals. A swimmer's success is based on attitude, hard work, and their ability to apply what they have learned in practice. Every participant can gain from his or her experience whether or not they win a single race. For this reason, the following objectives have been adopted:

To provide, an opportunity for social and emotional development.

To provide opportunities to learn good health habits.

To learn a sport they can enjoy the rest of their lives.

To teach children character development with honesty, caring, respect and responsibility.

1. Our coaching staff's primary goal is to help swimmers become better human beings. This is done by building confidence, teaching respect for others.
2. Swimmers should be well rounded. Our coaching staff will support a combination of family, athletics, and friends.
3. Swimmers will be encouraged to do their best in practice and in races.
4. Swimming technique will be emphasized above all else in training.
5. Parents should feel comfortable in approaching coaches about their swimmer in our program. Coaches will make decisions regarding swimmers taking into account parental concerns and what is best for the swimmer from the coaches' point of view.

Swimming Philosophy:

1. Individual improvement is the objective
2. Sportsmanlike behavior is equally important to improving one's performance. Respect the officials, congratulate the other competitors, encourage teammates, determined effort and mature behaviors are encouraged by the coaching staff.
3. Swimmers are encouraged to set realistic goals and bring their goals to practice every day.
4. Respect for the coaches and respect for each teammate.
5. Try your best!

Coaches Expectations:

- Be on time.
- Always listen to your coach- be quiet when your coach is talking to you.
- Always do your best. Give it your all at every practice and meet.
- Respect – Swimmers must at all times respect their teammates, other teams, other pools, and all coaches.
- Stay motivated and be positive – An excellent attitude leads to excellent swimming. Coaches will do their best to make sure that the team spirit remains positive at all times.
- Swimmers are expected to display encouragement, and support for their peers. Older swimmers are looked upon as role models for the younger swimmers.
- Coaches will encourage good swimming habits during practices. As this will lead to good habits during meets.
- Have fun, when you come to practice show respect, stay positive, always give 100% whether in practice or at a meet and you will have fun.

YMCA Locker Room Etiquette: It is important to remember the locker rooms are used by all members of the YMCA and it is very important that all swimmers be respectful while using the YMCA facility.

DISCIPLINE POLICY: To ensure the safety of all swimmers the following progressive discipline steps will be taken for those swimmers who disregard pool/safety rules:

- Verbal Warning
- Swimmer sits out for 5-10 minutes
- Swimmer will be asked to leave the activity or event for the day
- If behavior continues, parental attendance will be required at practice

There is zero tolerance for any type of bullying, harassment or physical conflict (as deemed by a reasonable person) between swimmers, or other members at the facility.

Team Goals and Requirements

The Clark Memorial YMCA swim team program will be characterized by adherence to certain goals and objectives. The coaching staff will strive to teach, train, and motivate children of all ages to achieve their potential in competitive swimming and create an experience that will prove valuable to them throughout life.

Excellence will be achieved when each swimmer knows he or she has done everything possible to achieve their desired goals. This program is aimed at long-term success versus short-term goals. Emphasis will be placed on basic skills, stroke technique, conditioning, and healthy competition.

Program Requirements

Attendance /Practice:

Items to bring to practice are goggles, water, swim cap and towel.

The coaching staff feels very strongly that practice attendance demonstrates commitment and is important to a swimmer's success. Meet performance and personal goals will be affected if the swimmer does not regularly attend practice.

Attendance should be in proportion to a swimmer's desire for success in the pool.

Practices will be held Monday- Friday for 1 hour each day. Swimmers may swim a three-day a week as well. Regular attendances will result in a more rapid mastery of skills as well as a spirit of camaraderie and teamwork.

Practices and workouts are hard! They are supposed to be. They are designed to tell the body, "This is hard work for me... you better do something to enable me to do it again later." When we push ourselves outside our comfort zone, the body actually responds by becoming more efficient.

- When swimming your set, swim up the right side of the pool and back down on the right side. You can pass swimmers on the left side.
- When done swimming your set be considerate of others coming in behind you, stay clear of the wall so swimmers can finish.
- Do not sit or hang on the lane lines or run on the pool deck.
- Know and follow the Pool Rules, no matter what pool you are visiting.

Swim Meets:

Swimmers are encouraged to stay on deck at all meets-dual and championship until the entire session is over. If a child is sick on the day of the meet, please inform the Head Coach as soon as possible and leave a message. This will enable them to adjust the meet roster for the benefit of the team.

Some suggestions for items to bring to swim meets are: goggles, towels (more than one), healthy snacks, water, extra clothes, sweat shirts and warm up pants, quiet games, books, cards...

Parent items: Folding chair, camera, water, snacks, dress in layers (indoor pools are hot)

Areas of Competition:

The Clark Sharks Swim Team is fortunate to compete in two leagues. These leagues are the Worcester County League and the Granite State.

Worcester County League:

During the dual meet seasons, meets are held primarily on weekends and last approximately 3 hours. Each swimmer is allowed to compete in 3 individual events and, 2 relays.

Warm-Up

Swimmers are encouraged to be on time for the warm-up.

Dual Meet Ribbons:

Points and ribbons are usually awarded to the top three finishers in all races, and each group is scored separately. However, when our team fields more than three swimmers in one particular event, more than one heat (one race) is swum in that event. This is so everyone can swim in the events the coaches think would be best for them. In this case, only the first heat scores points.

Granite State Swim League

During the summer months, the Clark Sharks participate in the Granite State Swim League.

Determining Meet Participation:

Determining when, where, type meet, events and how often a swimmer competes is an integral part of their training routine. All scratching of events; will be done by a member of the coaching staff only. Relays are determined by the coaching staff and may or may not be run with the four fastest swimmers in the age group. Relays are determined by the coaching staff with the best interest of the team in mind.

Parental Participation

A Parent's Role: Be Supportive, Be Positive!

It is essential to the program's success that parents with a swimmer (s) enrolled in the program; establish a framework of positive and enthusiastic support, publicly and at home. Remember this is a team! Coaches make decisions about the program based on their experience and understanding of what is in the best interest of the **entire team**.

Parents should encourage their children to honor their commitments.

Required Parents' Participation:

As stated earlier, this is a program that requires commitment. The following apply to EVERY family participating in the Clark Sharks Swim Team program.

1. Parents must participate in work assignments at meets and team functions. Every attempt will be made to accommodate work schedules, travel, etc. Remember, this participation is to benefit the children. This includes working the required sessions at all of our Clark Shark events.
2. Bake Sales and Swim-a-thon's are a great way to raise money for The Clark Sharks. This money goes towards making improvements for our swimmers!! The more food/drinks we donate, the less the team spends, which means more goes to the children!
3. The more parent involvement the better for the Clark Sharks program.

Parent Board:

Parent Board Members:

President: Jenn DeCarolis (Parent of Cassie DeCarolis)

Vice President: Rebecca Benedict (Parent of Arielle, Michaela and Owen)

Secretary: Kim Buckler (Parent of Elaina and Samantha)

Treasurer: Mark Lawrence (Parent of Mark, Chloe and Drew)

The Clark Sharks Swim Team has a parent board in place to organize many aspects of the team outside of coaching. The more people that get involved the less work there is for everyone!!

Meet Responsibilities: Responsibilities include all aspects of a meet, such as timing assignments, stroke and turn officials, set up, clean up, etc.

Computer: The purpose is to assist the coaching staff in recording swimmer's times, meet entries and results and other computer work to help with the swim team.

Runner: The runner takes DQ slips from the stroke and turn judges as well as timing sheets to the office.

Timers: Each team provides its own timers and watches. In a dual meet, approximately 9 timers are needed. In other meets, a minimum of six timers are needed.

Announcer/Starter: Announces the events in the meet

Stroke and Turn Officials: Officials that determine whether the swimmers have swum their events legally or illegally.

Concessions: Selling of various goods and programs to raise money for the team.

Camera/Video: Person designated to take photos during the swim meet.

Bull Pen Person: Person designated to set up swimmers in their upcoming events prior to entering the deck area.

Deck Parent: Parent who is assisting with keeping the children lined up between the bull pen and the starting blocks.

**** Remember that the parent board is designed so the coaching staff can do what they do best...COACH! Please get involved, the more parents that are involved**

the less everyone has to do and the more the swimmers benefit**

What makes up our Team?

- Swimmers- give their best effort at every practice and grow as a team.
- Parents- Support the team by volunteering and cheering
- Coaches- Offer positive feedback and support to all swimmers

Communication:

Good communication is vital to any organization; therefore, we have attempted to establish numerous channels of communication to facilitate information gathering, clarification.

E-Mail: E-Mail is the quickest and most efficient way to keep all families up to date as the season progresses. It is important that all families give the Coach, Barbara Lawrence an accurate e-mail address for the parents. Please get into the habit of checking your emails on a regular basis so you are up to date on the goings on of the team.

**Coach Barbara Lawrence e-mail addresses:

blawrence@theclark.com

coachbarbara@comcast.net

Bulletin Boards:

Bulletin boards will be updated regularly with announcements and other Swim-team information. The main swim team bulletin boards are located in the hallway by the Coaches office. This information will include general meet information, entries, results, etc.

Direct Contact:

It is very important that the coaches are 100% focused on the swimmers during practice sessions and meets. Please take this into consideration when speaking with the coaching staff, if necessary please try to speak with the coaches before or after practice, and/or meets. If you feel like you need significant time please try to make an appointment with that coach.

Glossary of Swimming Terms:

Meet: This is two or more teams coming together to compete against each other. A meet with two teams usually lasts about 3 hours.

Event: This is what your child will be swimming at the meet. Your child could be in up to 5 events in one meet. Coaches do their best to stagger your swimmers events so they are not back to back, but sometimes this cannot be avoided.

Heat: There may be more than six swimmers in an event; this would result in having two or more heats of one event. Heats are usually decided by ability so your child will be swimming against other swimmers with similar times.

Starter: The starter is the person that announces the meet. This person is the one that gives the commands to step up, take your mark and finally pushes the buzzer for the start. During starts we ask that you are as quiet as possible so swimmers can hear these commands clearly.

False Start: A false start is when your swimmer leaves the block before the buzzer has sounded. This is most often caused by nerves but could also happen from other distractions.

DQ: Swimming is a technical sport. During meets officials will watch swimmers for proper technique. Swimmers will be DQ'd for a variety of reasons. Most officials will fill out a DQ sheet that will go to the coach. DQ's should be viewed as "teachable moments".

BLOCKS: The blocks are where the swimmer starts the race.

Bull Pen: This is the area your swimmer goes to before swimming in their event. It is here they are told what heat and lane they will be swimming in.

Individual Event: This is an event your swimmer competes in all by themselves against other teams. The goal of the individual event is to improve upon your personal times.

Relay Event: A relay is made up of four swimmers from your team. Each swimmer swims one leg of the race. There are two relays your swimmer could be a part of. Medley Relays consist of Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle or a Freestyle Relay where each swimmer swims freestyle.

IM: IM means Individual Medley. An IM is an individual event where the swimmer swims each of the four strokes continuously. The IM order is Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle.

Streamline: A body position with the hands interlocked, arms straight and stretched overhead, the head is centered between the arms, legs together, body straight, and toes pointed.

Pull Set: This is a drill that concentrates on the swimmer's upper body. No kicking is involved.

Kick Set: This is a drill that concentrates on the legs, no upper body involved.

Flip Turn: A fast and efficient turn done in a tuck position; used in the freestyle and backstroke events in competition.

Catch: The stage in a stroke when the swimmer first engages the water in a way to start moving; the start of the power phase.

Recovery: The stage in the stroke when the arms/legs relax and return to the starting position.

Core Body: Core strength comes from the trunk area of the body. Your abdominals are the major aspect of core strength.

Set: A group of similar exercises performed together.



Swim Team Handbook

2011 - 2012